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04-096

Date: May 6, 2004

**PORTIONS OF FIRE DAMAGED STATE ROUTE 79 STILL UNDER  
ESCORT**

**RANCHO CALIFORNIA** - California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and California Highway Patrol (CHP) teams are escorting motorists between Pauba Road and the Dripping Springs/Vail Lake area, a distance of approximately 5 -1/2 miles along State route 79 in the Rancho California area of Riverside County.

These escorts help ensure that motorists will get through the affected zone safely. A flagging operation is in effect and motorists should expect a 1/2-hour delay through the 5-1/2-mile escort zone. The duration of the escort operation has not yet been determined. Updates will follow, as information becomes available.

Fire-fighting teams are on scene, working to control the fire that is reported still underway and work has already begun to repair damage to power lines caused by the fire. Caltrans teams have already assessed damages and expect to begin emergency repairs in the next few days. Although damaged, the route is safe for motorist travel. No detours are in effect and access is no longer restricted to 'residents only.'

According to the California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection (CDF), the Eagle Fire started on Sunday, May 2 at 3:14 p.m. It has burned 8,945 acres and is 80% contained. Fire equipment will remain on scene until the fire is 100% controlled which is expected to occur by May 7 at 6 p.m. CDF advises that all evacuation orders were lifted today for all areas impacted by the Eagle Fire and residents may return to their homes.

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